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OF

THE BACON SOCIETY.

CONTAINING ALSO THE

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT.

PUBLISHED PERIODICALLY.

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1887.

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GEORGE REDWAY,

15, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BACON SOCIETY.

No. IV.

At a meeting of the Society, held at the rooms of the British Society of Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. Alaric Alfred Watts in the Chair:—

The Secretary read the minutes of the last meeting, which were confirmed.

The following new members were elected: H. Stopes, Esq., J. J. B. Poclet, Esq.: also Mr. W. H. Wyman, of Cincinnati, author of the "Bibliography of the Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy," was elected an honorary member.

The Secretary then read the Report and Financial statement.

Mr. Watts read the concluding portion of his paper on "Shakespeare the Lawyer, Bacon the Poet." A discussion followed, in which the Secretary, Mr. F. Wentworth-Sheilds, Mr. Stopes, Mrs. Stopes, and the President took part.

NOTE.

When reference is made in the pages of this Journal to the Plays and Poems of Shakespeare, the spelling—*Shakespeare*—is adopted, which was almost always employed on the title pages of the Quartos, the Folios, and the Poems, when they were originally issued. When, however, the man, William *Shakspere*, is referred to, his name is spelt in one of the many ways which he himself, or his family employed—and we select one of those attached to his will, and the one which is most usually accepted by the Editors of our own time. This, so far from being a question-begging procedure, is a matter of simple accuracy. To give to William Shakspere, or any of his family, the name Shakespeare, is a mistake. Among their many *aliases*, Shakespeare, so spelt, is curiously *not* included.

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BACON SOCIETY.

—

The Bacon Society, the Council of which has now to render to its members an account of its first year's stewardship, was constituted at a meeting held on the 18th December, 1885, at the house of Mrs. Henry Pott, 81, Cornwall-gardens, and its first General Meeting took place on the 15th April following. It numbers 70 members and associates; it has held during the year, up to April last, three meetings, or conversaziones, at which the following papers were read, much interesting and suggestive discussion ensuing:—

"Bacon viewed by his Biographers," by Dr. R. M. Theobald.
"A Dialogue on Bacon's Character," by Mrs. Henry Pott and Mr. Scott Moncrieff.
"Did Francis Bacon write Shakespeare?" by Mr. Francis Fearon.
"Shakespeare the Lawyer and Bacon the Poet," Part I., by Mr. Alaric A. Watts.
"Bacon and Shakespeare on the Solace derived from Contemplation," by Dr. R. M. Theobald.

It has originated and published three numbers of a journal, or magazine, in which selections from its proceedings and other papers have been printed and circulated. Sensible of the obligation upon an association of this description, that it should possess a "local habitation" as well as a "name," it has estab-

lished quarters for the present at No. 23, Davies-street, Berkeley-square, where its Honorary Secretary, Dr. Theobald, will be ready at all times to receive enquiries or communications, addressed to the Society, or designed as contributions to its journal. It is now endeavouring to organise there a lending library for the use of its members, contributions to which, either by way of gift, or by loan for this purpose, will be gratefully received.

The Society has received, during the year 1886, subscriptions to the amount of £51 17s. 5d., of which £6 6s. 11d. had at the close of its financial year been expended in carrying out the foregoing objects, leaving in hand £45 10s. 6d., out of which liabilities amounting to £27 14s. 6d. have been since discharged.

If it be objected that this is but a scanty record of a year's work, it must be answered that the amount of the work of a Society must depend upon the funds at its command, and the number of workers able and willing to give practical assistance, by reading papers or otherwise. It is further to be borne in mind that its objects are at present but little known, that they enjoy little general sympathy, and that it has to make its public instead of finding it, as is the happy lot of most societies, already made to its hand. At the first General Meeting of the Society, the Chairman, in his opening address, referred to the valuable labours of Mrs. Pott in drawing attention to the writings of Bacon, and in investigating the connection believed to exist between those works and the plays and poems attributed to Shakespeare, and suggested that the time had come for affording her assistance. This proved, indeed, to be true to a fuller extent than could then have been antici-

pated. By the long and serious illness of this lady, the accumulated fruit of her labours, extending over many years, has been rendered unavailable for the purposes of the Society, and the action and the resources of the Society have been grievously crippled and impoverished. We are thankful to be able to report considerable improvement in the health of one who must be looked upon as the founder of the Society; but we dare not anticipate that she will be able to co-operate with us in any very active manner for a considerable time.

During the year the literature of our subject has received some important additions. Perhaps the most important of these is the new and enlarged edition, being the fourth which has been issued, of Judge Holmes's elaborate work on the Authorship of Shakespeare. Judge Holmes has added in this edition a valuable appendix of 120 pages, discussing various points which have come under his observation since the issue of the third edition, in 1875. In these supplementary pages he makes free use of Mrs. Pott's *Promus*, and bears just and generous testimony to the importance of that work as the most notable accession to the evidence which has been published on the subject in recent years. "The most striking peculiarity," he observes, "is that, like the Northumberland-house manuscript, it give us an authentic glimpse of Bacon in his literary workshop."

Another weighty, though less considerable, publication is Mr. O'Connor's work, entitled, "Hamlet's Note-book," of which a review will be found in the second number of the Society's journal. It deserves a wide circulation, because, while primarily polemical,

it does not confine itself to mere warfare, but makes several valuable contributions to the literature of the subject. Mr. W. H. Wyman has continued, in the pages of *Shakespeariana*, his enumeration of the works bearing on the Shakespeare-Bacon controversy. The number of such contributions to the subject recorded and noticed, with more or less fulness, by Mr. Wyman until December last is 340. It may be supposed that some arrest has been put upon the production of new discussions of the case by the announcement of Mr. Donnelly's work on the Cipher which he claims to have discovered in the 1623 folio edition of Shakespeare, in regard to which such information as is at present available will be found in the first and third numbers of the Society's journal.* If Mr. Donnelly makes good his claim, the position of those who have been led to attribute a connexion between Bacon and the plays and poems of Shakespeare will be much simplified, and their work will run into a new channel, rather one of comment and illustration of an established fact than a militant and polemic discussion of a disputed conclusion.

But, whether the advocates of the Baconian theory relating to the plays of Shakespeare are active or not, there is abundant evidence that their views are making themselves felt. All movements leading to new truth pass through four stages. First, absolute indifference on the part of the public; secondly, ridicule; thirdly, scorn and reprobation; fourthly, acceptance. The present question has entered into the second and third stages of this natural evolution. Casual references are continually turning up, and, as a rule, the tone adopted by public writers is that of anger or derision.

* See also page 158.

A serious attempt at refutation of the Baconian theory has, however, been made by Dr. Charles H. Higgins, of Birkenhead, who has published, in pamphlet form, two lectures, entitled, "Who Wrote the Plays Ascribed to Shakespeare?" In Germany, E. Hermann has published an essay entitled, "Urheberschaft and Urquell von Shakespeare's Dichtungen," a rather closely packed pamphlet of 75 pages, of which a considerable portion, *i.e.*, the first half, is devoted entirely to this question. Another German author, Eugen Reichel, has written a brochure entitled, "Wer schrieb das Novum Organum," giving the authorship to Shakspere as his mock-serious reply. A similar idea has been elaborated into an amusing article in *Macmillan's Magazine* for June, 1886, wherein a humorous attempt is made to establish the thesis that the stories attributed to Charles Dickens were really written by Herbert Spencer. And the time may be anticipated at which the subject may reach the distinction of awakening the sprightly humour of *Punch*.

During the year, lectures in support of the Baconian theory have been delivered at various places. In Torquay, Rev. S. E. Bengough, an associate of the Society, read a paper before the Natural History Society on the Baconian authorship of *King John*. It was well received, and elicited evidence that similar conclusions had already been formed independently by those who had given attention to the subject. In Burnley, Mr. Gill has brought the subject into notice. Lectures have also been given at Blackheath, Yarmouth, and other places.

The Council would feel obliged to any of their members who would kindly furnish them with any notices upon the subject in the provincial press.

A correspondent from Lucknow mentions that society had been much excited and interested in the Bacon-Shakespeare theories by the receipt of the *Nineteenth Century* for May, 1886, containing Mr. Wallace's article on the Donnelly Cipher. A German literary man writes: "I am thinking of preparing an essay on the Baconian theory, and the Donnelly Cipher; though it is especially difficult to obtain publicity for this theme in our newspapers and reviews. Not that the subject is not held by intelligent men, and even profound intellects, to be one of deep interest, but because of the opposition of the German Shakespeare Society, which does its utmost to repress all enquiry." Other German correspondents write to us in the same sense. A correspondent in Paris writes: "This lively nation has developed little interest in this great literary problem. Indeed, neither the works of Shakespeare nor of Bacon are much read or sympathised with here. But the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and the *Revue Brittanique* have done good service to the cause. They have, at least, opened men's eyes to the fact that it is a subject, not for contempt, but well worthy of investigation." Letters, some of considerable length, reach us from new and unknown correspondents in Australia and other colonies, testifying to the growing interest felt in such places in this question. But the difficulties connected with procuring information are great. It would be helpful if members of the Society, having friends abroad, would kindly assist in disseminating, by means of the book post, pamphlets or magazines, which might aid the spread of intelligence. A list of some of such brochures, some of which may be obtained of the Hon. Sec., with the prices annexed, will be found in the current number of the journal.

This introduces another very important topic, which by means of this report we wish to bring under the consideration of our members and associates. The activity of our society, both in the way of meetings and publications, must depend entirely upon the co-operation of friends, and it is most desirable that every member should embrace any opportunity that may arise of assisting the movement. This may be done in various ways.

1. Students of Bacon and Shakespeare are invited to contribute papers, to be read at the social meetings of the Society, and subsequently published in the journal. The topics which are available are very numerous, and there must be many who are qualified to give the results of their special study in this form.

2. Less elaborate papers, ranging from brief paragraphs to short essays or articles should be contributed for publication. Any definite discussion or statement of opinion, however fragmentary, may be available for this purpose; as we wish to make the Journal a storehouse of facts, arguments and even speculations, with a sound and reasonable basis, bearing on the controversy.

3. These fragmentary utterances may sometimes advantageously take the form of letters of enquiry, free statement of difficulties, or replies to objections raised either in the journal or in current literature.

4. All facts bearing upon our subject ought to be communicated to the Society through the Secretary; such as information of debates, lectures or other discourses bearing on the subject, held at debating societies or literary institutions; all casual references in periodical literature, or new publications, and

generally any cuttings or jottings relating to our topic.

5. Our own members may also help us by diffusing information concerning our Society, and enlisting new associates. In their own localities they may often take opportunities of inserting letters or paragraphs in provincial journals, which are often more open to the discussion of a topic which is supposed to be unpopular because it is so branded by literary leaders or spokesmen, than Metropolitan journals, whose liberty of action and speech is more restrained. And in all cases, whenever any scrap of information is inserted in provincial papers, a copy of the same should be sent to the Editor of the journal, or the Secretary of the Society.

6. Gifts in aid of the library would be very acceptable. The Committee have the pleasure to inform their members and associates that Mr. Ernest Jacob has presented to the library a copy of "Spedding's Life of Bacon," in seven volumes. Mr. Watts has promised other books bearing on the subject. Mr. Pott has sent a copy of the *Promus*. Thus the nucleus of a library has been formed, and it is hoped that additions may be frequently made.

7. Donations also in aid of the publishing fund are much required, so that the Journal may be issued more frequently, and means taken, by advertising and other ways, of bringing it before the public.

Bacon Society.—Income and Expenditure Account for the Year 1886.

RECEIPTS.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
To Subscriptions, 2 at £2 2s.	4	4	0			
„ 34 at £1 1s.	35	14	0			
„ 23 at 10s. 6d.	12	1	6			
	£51	19	6			
Less Amount Short, paid ...	0	2	1			
				51	17	5
				£51	17	5
To Balance at Bank, 1st Jan., 1887				45	10	6
„ Sale of Journal				0	9	1
				£45	19	7

EXPENDITURE.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
By Clowes and Son, Preliminary Printing				6	2	6
„ Bank Charges				0	4	5
„ Balance at Bank				45	10	6
				£51	17	5
By Accounts not paid until 1887:—						
„ Printing Nos. 1 and 2 of Journal...	18	14	0			
„ Sundries	1	14	6			
				20	8	6
„ Expenses attending Meeting at Social Science Rooms	2	17	4			
„ Ditto Printing Cards ...	0	7	0			
				3	4	4
„ Secretary — Postage and Sundry Expenses ...				4	1	8
„ Balance				18	5	1
				£45	19	7

I have Examined the above Income and Expenditure Account, and certify that it is correct.

June, 1887. Wm. Theobald, F.C.A.

COMMITTEE OF THE BACON SOCIETY.

PRESIDENT:

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ALEXANDER CORY, ESQ., 13, Clarendon Road, Kensington, W.

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HONORARY SECRETARY:

R. M. THEOBALD, ESQ., 25, Lee Terrace, Blackheath, S.E.

HONORARY AUDITOR:

WILLIAM THEOBALD, ESQ., Crouch End, N.

BANKERS:

MESSRS. CHARLES HOPKINSON & SONS, 3, Regent Street, S.W.

LOCAL CENTRE OF THE BACON SOCIETY:

23, Davies Street, Berkeley Square, W.

LIST OF THE MEMBERS (M), ASSOCIATES (A), AND HONORARY MEMBERS (H.M).

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Poclet, J. J. B, (A), 55, Westbourne Park Road, W.
Pott, Henry, Esq. (M), 81, Cornwall Garden, W.
Pott, Mrs. Henry (M), ,, ,,
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Savile, Rev. Bourchier Wrey (HM), Shillingford, Exeter.
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Wyman, W. H. (HM), 171, Vine Street, Cincinnati, U.S.

SHAKESPEARE, THE LAWYER; BACON, THE POET.

By Mr. A. A. Watts.

PART II.

In the first part of this paper which I had the honour to read to the Society on the 18th April last, I observed that a person to whom the theory should be presented for the first time that the plays of Shakespeare were written by Bacon, would be very naturally inclined to say: "Show me if you can the Law in Shakespeare and the Poetry in Bacon."

An answer to the first of these requirements I endeavoured to supply on that occasion. It will be found in the last number of the Society's Journal. I am now to reply to the second. It is needful, in the first instance, to attempt some definition of the word Poetry. Poetry is, of course, not made such by a rhyme at the end of the line; nor can a combination of words in essence prosaic be converted into poetry by being written in blank, or in any other description of verse. Verse and metre are but the handmaidens of poetry, and may be employed or not at the determination of their august mistress. By Poetry in its most general sense, and it is in that sense that I am claiming to recognize her divine lineaments in the compositions of Bacon, I understand one of two things: either the emotional and imaginative expression of the actual—or the definite delineation of that which, without it, appeals to us only vaguely, as abstract or unreal, in the narrow sense in which we are too much in the habit of employing the word *reality*. We may more closely describe it in the words employed by Gibbon, the historian, to define the Greek language. It is a language the functions of which are to "give a soul to the objects of sense, and a body to the abstractions of science." Judged by this standard, the highest and most dignified definition of which the word Poetry is susceptible, where do we find it illustrated in the writings of Bacon? It would be

more difficult to reply to the enquiry, "Where do we *not* find it?" For experience married to imagination—the divine sources of poetry—displayed in language the most finished, and illustrated by imagery the most ingenious and remote in apparent association, analogy and paradox, look forth to us in almost every page, proclaiming the concealed poet. "I desire you"—says Bacon in a letter to Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Davies, himself a poet of no mean standing, then in waiting on King James on his first entrance into England—"I desire you to be good to concealed poets."* Bacon therefore claimed to be a poet, and one unavowed. It may be assumed, I think, that this expression was employed by him in its more narrow and contracted sense, as a writer of metrical compositions; and the expression is certainly significant of mystery in this direction. But we can scarcely take a man's own words for being a poet. In some notes read to the Society by my friend, Mr. Theobald, upon Bacon and Shakespeare, "On the Solace derived from Contemplation," which will be found in the last number of the Society's Journal, he observed upon the strong effort of imagination by which this illustrious man was enabled in his hours of adversity to summon to his presence, for comfort, some of the mighty dead who had suffered in a way resembling his own case. "There is," he remarked, "something interesting and almost unique in this mental attitude. It sounds like a dream of poetry. It could only be possible to a mind in which the dramatic, realising powers of the imagination are the supreme, ever-governing principles of life." On hearing these remarks, I could not refrain from anticipating the purposes of my present paper by drawing attention to the definition of a poet contained in Wordsworth's preface to his Lyrical Ballads, as being one "owning a disposition to be affected in a greater degree than other men by absent things as though they were present." And this leads me to another definition of poetry by the same illustrious poet, in which he observes that among the chief of the causes upon which depend the enjoyment of poetry, is to be reckoned the

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* *Life*, vol. iii., p. 65.

pleasure which the mind derives from the perception of similitude in dissimilitude ; because another illustrious writer, who was surely himself a poet, and was certainly no especial eulogist of Bacon—I refer to Lord Macaulay—observes that "in wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, Bacon never had an equal."

In speaking of qualities attributable to the poet, possessed by Bacon, I would desire to refer to one not very usually, I must admit, associated in the minds of men with poetry, but which I believe to be an invariable attribute of every poet who has really commanded, apart from the fashions and phantasies of the hour, the sympathies of the English-speaking races ; I mean a sort of divine common sense, "a sweet reasonableness," if I may employ the words of an eminent critic, himself a poet. This quality I cannot more particularly define in better language than in the words of Macaulay as applied to Bacon : "In the temper of Bacon," he says," there was a singular union of audacity and sobriety. . . . No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. It stopped at the first check from good sense. . . . In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world. Yet in his magnificent day-dreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned." It is not within the immediate purpose of this paper to draw direct comparisons between the poetical gifts of Bacon, and those of the writer of the Shakespearian dramas; but I cannot avoid pausing for a moment to ask you to reflect on the foregoing characterisation in its applicability to the writer of those plays ; because, I think, that it is to the quality of imagination described in those words, and applied to Bacon, that the universality of the popularity of the Plays attributed to Shakespeare is to be mainly attributed. It is this quality that has brought those writings home to all men's business and bosoms. Its audacity elevated men's emotions in reading them ; its sobriety restrained them always to the region of good sense ; and it raised the reader in his own self-esteem (one of the great secrets of popularity),

by showing him regions in the imagination beyond those in which he had himself adventured, but into which he now felt himself able to enter, because he could understand and assimilate them.

Having reminded you that Bacon claimed to be a poet, and having endeavoured to show that his writings, as known to us, exhibit some important qualifications in the writer for being such, I will ask you now to accompany me to the consideration of how he was viewed in that light by others likely to know, or capable of judging.

There is a curious book, published in 1645, after Bacon's death it will be observed, and when it could be no man's interest to compliment him, entitled, "The Great Assizes Holden in Parnassus, By Apollo and His Assessors, for Trying Certain Malefactors," who, I am sorry to say, were the representatives, in that age, of the newspaper press of to-day. And the names of the various high Personages, in this august realm of Poetry, are given at length, the first in rank of whom is the "Lord of Verulam, Chancellor of Parnassus." Shakspere is introduced as the eleventh of the jurymen.

It is a curious, not to say remarkable, circumstance that Ben Jonson, who was intimately acquainted with Bacon and Shakspere, applies the same comparison to describe both, applying it, in the one case, to the great actor or philosopher; in the other, to the great poet. In his lines to Shakespeare, "and what he hath left us," prefaced to the edition of the plays of 1623, he apostrophises him in these words :—

> "When thy socks were on,
> Leave thee alone for the comparison
> Of all that insolent Greece, or haughty Rome,
> Sent forth; or, since did from their ashes come."

In his writing, entitled "Timber, or Discoveries," Ben Jonson, in enumerating sixteen of the greatest wits of his day, and the time immediately preceding his own, does not name Shakspere, but speaks of Bacon as he who "hath filled up all numbers"—the poet, you will observe—"and performed that in our tongue which may be compared or preferred either to 'insolent Greece or haughty Rome,' so that he may be

named and stand as the mark and acme of our language." Whether Ben Jonson, in employing these expressions, referred to the "concealed poet," we can only conjecture; but certain it is that, in a poem addressed to Bacon on his birthday, printed in Ben Jonson's shorter poems, entitled, "Underwoods," he has this curious and, as respects the context, unintelligible, line:—

". . . In the midst,
Thou stand'st as though a mystery thou didst."

If Bacon "filled up all numbers," which he certainly could not have done, except by metrical composition, and if these were of such value and extent as to be comparable—even preferable—either to "insolent Greece" or "haughty Rome," so that a competent critic should seriously describe the writer as one "who may be named, and stand as the mark or acme of our language," we naturally enquire, Where is all this poetry to be found? Ben Jonson knew too well the value of words not to understand perfectly what he was saying; and he was speaking after Bacon's death, when he could have had no temptation to flatter. Where, then, I enquire, are these "numbers"? All the poetry of Bacon—I employ the word now in the contracted sense, in which, in so far as I am aware, the word "numbers" is always used, *i.e.*, poetry written in metre or verse, in which the syllables are numbered—is practically confined to a version of a few of the Psalms of David, written by him for his friend George Herbert, the poet. I should be sorry to seek to found for him the reputation of a poet on these compositions. Some attempt at argument adverse to the possibility of his having been the writer in any sense or degree of the Shakespearian dramas has, I believe, been advanced on this modest substructure. There are comparatively few of our great poets, and a considerable number of our minor ones, who have attempted—I would venture to say, presumed—to convert these divine compositions into metrical verse; and I am not aware of anyone of them of whom it can be claimed that he has advanced his poetical reputation by so doing; or that, if he had enjoyed none from other compositions, he could have

secured one from these. The reason is not far to seek. These compositions are the highest poetry as they stand, and therefore supreme examples of what I have before stated, that poetry is something very far from capable of being confined to writings in metre or verse. Nevertheless, there are in one of these versions of the Psalms—and it is not the only, though I think the most conspicuous, example—some stanzas which display the concealed poet.

We all remember the words of the Psalmist: "Thou turnest man to destruction: again Thou sayest, Come again, ye children of men. As soon as Thou scatterest them, they fade away suddenly like the grass. In the morning it is green, and groweth up; but, in the evening, it is cut down, dried up, and withered." Let us see what Bacon makes of it, in paraphrasing this in verse:—

"Thou carriest man away as with a tide,
Then down swim all his thoughts, that mounted high;
Much like a mocking dream, that will not bide,
But flies before the sight of waking eye;
Or, as the grass that cannot term obtain
To see the summer come about again.

At morning, fair it musters on the ground;
At even, it is cut down and laid along;
And, though it spared were, and favour found,
The weather would perform the mower's wrong.
Thus hast Thou hanged our life on brittle pins,
To let us know it will not bear our sins."

I do not profess to be a poetical critic, but I do not envy the poetical intuitions of him who is unable to see the poet in these verses.

Nor do I propose to cite, in support of my claim to regard Bacon as a poet, some portions of a masque known to have been written by him, to be presented by the Society of Gray's Inn on an occasion of state. In this composition the writer was, in his turn, entrammelled by the necessities, mainly panegyrical, of the occasion, and the euphuism of the Court language and frame of cultivated thought of that day. It reminds one of the comparison drawn by Goethe between the

writings of the author of the Shakespearian dramas and those of Bacon. "The latter," he said, "was like the timber cut and fashioned to the uses of man. The former was as is the grown and growing forest." Such a composition as that of which I am speaking may, perhaps, be very fairly illustrated by a comparison between the writings of poets laureate, even the most illustrious not excepted, written on duty for State occasions, and those compositions the fruit of seasons when the spirit of delight really visited them. They may, from their very nature and inherent necessity, be said to bear the same relation to poetry that high fashion in dress does to true grace and beauty. The two are incompatible. How, then, am I to establish that Bacon was a poet? I will say: *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.* The poetry of Bacon is to be found in his prose; and, founding my argument, not upon what of metrical composition he has avowedly left us, not upon the opinions of contemporaries highly capable of judging, not even on the calmer judgment of later cultivated opinion, I will ask you to allow his own words, or a few of them, necessarily fragmentary, to appeal to your own hearts and your own imaginations, and to see for yourselves the divine glance of poetry concealed, or awaiting recognition in the background, as that coy mistress of man is wont, at her best moments, to do, in and forth from the extracts with which, leaving him to speak for himself, I shall be well content to found his reputation as "the concealed poet."

"Truth, he says,which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the enquiry of Truth,which is the love-making or wooing of it, the knowledge of Truth,which is the presence of it,and the belief of Truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature" (1).*

"Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in Charity, rest in Providence, and turn upon the poles of Truth" (2).

"Mixture of Falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work better, but it embaseth it" (3).

* For Notes to these passages see page 144.

"There is a false peace or unity"—(speaking of religion)—"grounded upon implicit ignorance. For all colours will agree in the dark. Truth and Falsehood in such things are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image. They may cleave, but they will not incorporate."

"There be they which count it a bondage to fix a belief. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them. (4) If there were taken out of such men's minds vain opinions, differing states, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, it would leave the minds of a number of men, poor, shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition and unpleasing to themselves."

"It is as natural to die as to be born. And to a little infant perhaps the one is as painful as the other. Death openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy" (5).

"As in Nature, things move violently to their place, and calmly in their place, so virtue in ambition is violent, but in authority settled and calm" (6).

"I had rather believe all the fables of the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alkoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind. . . . For it is a thousand times more credible that four mutable elements and one immutable fifth essence, duly and eternally placed, need no God, than that an army of infinite small portions or seeds unplaced, should have produced this order and beauty without a Divine marshall" (7).

"It is a poor centre of man's actions, himself. It is right earth. For that only stands fast on its own centre. Whereas all things that have affinity with the heavens move upon the centre of another which they benefit" (8).

"As the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all innovations, which are the births of Time" (9).

"A crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk but a tinkling cymbal where there is no love" (10).

"The communicating of a man's self to his friend works two

contrary effects. It redoubleth joys and cutteth griefs in half. For there is no man that imparteth his joys to his friend but he joyeth the more. And no man imparteth his griefs to his friend but he grieveth the less" (11).

"Suspicions among thoughts are like bats among birds. They ever fly by twilight."

"Riches are the baggage of virtue. The Roman word is better: *impedimenta*, hindrances. For as the baggage is to an army, so is riches to virtue. It cannot be spared or left behind; but it hindereth the march. Yea, and the care of it sometimes loseth or disturbeth the victory" (12).

"Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament; Adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer revelation of God's favour. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols. And the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath laboured more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge, therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odours, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed. For Prosperity doth best discover Vice, but Adversity doth best discover Virtue" (13).

The writer of this passage not a Poet! I shall venture to conclude these very imperfect notes by affirming that for all the qualities that constitute poetry in the highest sense of the term there is not, for grace and harmony of language, for felicity and variety of illustration, for spiritual and imaginative intuition, a passage of the same length superior in any known poem. Well may the great critic whom I have before quoted, who was certainly no unreasoning panegyrist of Bacon (I am referring to Lord Macaulay) say: "In keenness of observation he has been equalled though perhaps never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was his own. The glance with which

he surveyed the intellectual Universe resembled that which the Archangel, from the golden threshold of Heaven, darted down into the new creation :—

> "Round he surveyed—and well might where he stood—
> So high above the circling canopy
> Of Night's extended shade—from Eastern point
> Of Libra, to the fleecy star which bears
> Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
> Beyond the horizon."

Mr. Theobald referred, as an illustration of Bacon's poetical bias, to his extraordinary fertility in the invention of imaginative names for scientific facts or forms. The steps of his induction are *Vintages*. His instances are *Migratory*, *Evoking*, or *Summoning*, *Travelling*, *Clandestine*, or *Twilight*. There are instances of the *Finger-post*, of the *Gate*, of *Strife*; *Doses of Nature*, and so on.

Again, Bacon's *Primary Philosophy* is a futile attempt to give a scientific recognition to analogies or resemblances between natural laws and human thought and experience, which are the very stuff on which poetry works, but are quite outside the scope of Philosophy. On these fantastic fancies, Macaulay says:—"If the making of ingenious and sparkling similitudes like these be indeed the *Philosophia Prima*, we are quite sure that the greatest philosophical work of the nineteenth century is Mr. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*."

Mr. Theobald also referred to a remarkable dialogue, written by Mrs. Pott, which, it is to be hoped, will soon be published in the Journal, and which was read at an early meeting of the Society. In this dramatic colloquy, a number of opinions, various and conflicting, as to Bacon's intellectual and moral qualities, were quoted from a large collection of authorities. In only one thing did they all agree, and that was, that *Bacon is a poet*. Even those critics who are most disposed to minimise his good qualities cannot deny him this. As a rule, if a critic casts a slur on the poetic merits of Bacon, he has some bias which determines his point of view. Thus, Mr. Storr, having decided that the Bacon-Shakespeare idea is a "wild theory," holds Bacon's poetical gifts very cheap. Shelley,

on the other hand, who wrote before strong views adverse to Bacon had gained currency, is eloquent in praise of his poetic gifts. These two judgments make rather a striking contrast:—

STORR.

There is hardly a trace in Bacon of that transfusing and transforming imagination which creates a new heaven and a new earth, which reveals the elemental secrets of things, and thrills us with a shock of surprise and delight as a new revelation. . . There is more poetry in Browne's *Hydriotaphia* than in Bacon's collected works.

[N.B.—The *Hydriotaphia* is rather a dry, antiquarian disquisition on urn burial and sepulture, in which passages that have any sort of eloquence or rapture are few and far between. It is immeasurably inferior both to the *Religio Medici* and *Christian Morals*, by the same author. The gems when they do occur are of the purest and brightest quality; but as a whole it is heavy, dry, and unsucculent as its own earthy topic.]

SHELLEY.

Lord Bacon was a poet. His language has a sweet and majestic rhythm, which satisfies the sense, no less than the almost superhuman wisdom of his philosophy satisfies the intellect. It is a strain which distends, and then bursts the circumference of the reader's mind, and pours itself forth together with it into the universal element, with which it has perpetual sympathy.

Plato exhibits the rare union of close and subtle logic, with the Pythian enthusiasm of poetry, melted by the splendour and harmony of his periods, into one irresistible stream of musical impressions, which hurry the persuasions onward, as in a breathless career. His language is that of an immortal spirit, rather than a man. Lord Bacon is, perhaps, the only writer who, in these particulars, can be compared with him. His imitator, Cicero, sinks, in the comparison, into an ape mocking the gestures of a man.

This may he taken as a type of the singularly contradictory judgments that are passed upon Bacon's qualities, both intellectual and moral.

Mr. Watts has justly remarked that the highest poetry may exist without verse or metre. But in many persons the association between metrical form and poetry is so fixed that it is difficult for them to recognise unreclaimed poetry, not yet fenced in by rhythmical enclosures. For such persons it may be well to show how easily Bacon's prose may be turned, with little alteration, into very colourable Shakespearian verse. The late Dr. Thomson, of Melbourne, was

accustomed to amuse and mystify his friends with these literary toys. He says, "That the bold and figurative rhetoric with which Bacon charms his reader can be readily thrown into heroic verse, conclusive proof was given when the writer playfully threw many parts into that form, and showed them to literary people, who, after vainly hunting through all the Concordances, concluded that the magically-turned sentence must be 'some old readings.'" One of our members, Rev. S. E. Bengough, has sent me several specimens of this transformation. I will select one or two:—

In the "Advancement of Learning" there is the following passage:—"Who taught the raven, in a drowth, to throw pebbles into an hollow tree, where she spied water, that the water might rise, so as she might come to it? Who taught the bee to sail through such a vast sea of air, and to find the way from a field in flower, a great way off, to her hive? Who taught the ant to bite every grain of corn that she burieth in her hill, lest it should take root and grow?" This is easily coaxed into verse, as follows:—

"Who taught the thirsty raven, in a drought,
Espying water in a hollow tree,
To throw in pebbles till it reached her beak?
Who taught the bee to sail through seas of air,
And find her far-off hive from fields in flower?
Who taught the ant to bite each grain of corn
She buries in her hill, lest it take root?

The following is cast in a higher strain:—Bacon writes, "Pragmatical men may not go away with an opinion that learning is like a lark, that can mount, and sing, and please herself, and nothing else; but may know that she holdeth as well of the hawk, that can soar aloft, and can also descend and strike upon the prey." Bacon could easily have put this into verse, somewhat thus:—

"Let not dull plodders in affairs conceive
That learning, like the lark, doth mount and sing
Only to please herself, and nothing else;
But let them know she holdeth of the hawk,
That not alone can soar aloft, but stoops
From heavenward flight, to strike upon the prey."

To these specimens by Mr. Bengough, I may add the

following paraphrase of the opening sentences of the "Essay of Great Place" :—

> "Thrice servants those who dwell in greatest place.
> First, for their Sovereign, or the State, they toil;
> Then fame and business hold them fast in bonds.
> Gone is the spiritual franchise of themselves,
> Nor know they freedom in their acts or times.
> How strange the passion which will seek for power,
> And yet loose liberty! and no less strange
> To seek for power o'er others, and to loose
> The nobler power over a man's own self!
> The rising into place is labour vast;
> By pains men rise, and come to greater pains.
> Sometimes 'tis base, and by indignities
> The foolish climber comes to dignities.
> Slippery the standing on the height attained,
> And the regress is downfall or eclipse.
> Alas! that life should yet prolong its course
> When will from being severed is and torn!
> Nay, when they would retire they not how,
> Nor will they turn when reason bids them cease.
> When age and sickness ask for shadowed rest.
> Still the tired placeman shrinks from privateness;
> Like some old townsman, sitting at his door,
> Though, sitting thus, he offers age to scorn."

To me it seems strange that anyone can read any of Bacon's works, even his most scientific and philosophical, and miss those indications of soaring imagination, poetic insight, and a wisdom that awakens awe, as for a heaven-derived inspiration, which are pre-eminently characteristic of great poetic genius. In some parts of the "Advancement of Learning," when he is giving specimens of such departments of learning as have been neglected or insufficiently explored, he is so carried away by the rushing impulse of his intellectual and imaginative affluence, that he seems to have left his main object far behind, while pursuing the course which his genius prompts. We are inclined to say: What have all these exquisite fancies, these wise and sagacious views of men and society, these philosophic musings on all sorts of moral and psychological topics—what have all these to do with his primary aim of drawing a map or globe of learning, and pointing out the new paths yet to

be opened? What have all these winged and radiant strangers to do in this academic gallery? In truth Bacon was so primarily and necessarily a poet that his rapture continually carried him away, as on a strong, soaring pinion, and all the air is flooded with his glorious and tuneful music. I have thought, when reading him, of Tennyson's description of the lavish exuberance of a Summer's Day—

> "I wondered at the bounteous hours,
> The slow result of winter showers;
> *You scarce could see the grass for flowers.*"

Even the abundant verdure of the path he treads is hidden by the inexhaustible efflorescence of his wit and fancy and imagination. I need not quote or point to special extracts to illustrate this; no one can read the second book of the "Advancement of Learning," or the eight books of the "*De Augmentis*," or the "Wisdom of the Ancients," without finding abundant proofs of what I have said.

It has been said that Bacon, if he had some of the qualities of a poet, yet was deficient in humour. I do not think so. If one of the characteristics of humour is the blending of seriousness with wit, or of sadness with gentle laughter, Bacon sometimes indulges in a melancholy and yet fantastic musing, which is only possible to a mind richly endowed with humorous fancies. Surely there is a deliciously quaint humour in the passage which I have attempted to paraphrase from the "Essay of Great Place":—"Nay, retire men cannot when they would; neither will they when it were reason; but are impatient of privateness, even in age and sickness, which require the shadow; like old townsmen that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn."* And I think no writer has ever surpassed the delicate and plaintive humour of the following passage from the first book of the "Advancement of Learning." "Learning," he says, "faithfully pursued, "taketh away vain admiration of anything, which is the root of all weakness; for all things are admired, either because they are new, or because they are great. For novelty, no man that

* "Like an old tale still; which will have matter to rehearse, though credit be asleep, and not an ear open."—*W. Tale V. ii.*

wadeth in learning or contemplation thoroughly but will find that printed in his heart, *Nil novi super terram.* Neither can any man marvel at the play of puppets that goeth behind the curtain, and adviseth well of the motion ; and as for magnitude, as Alexander the Great, after that he was used to great armies, and the great conquests of the spacious provinces in Asia, when he received letters out of Greece, of some fights and services there, which were commonly for a passage, or a fort, or some walled town, at the most,—he said *it seemed to him that he was advertised of the battles of the frogs and the mice, that the old tales went of.* So certainly, if a man meditate much upon the universal frame of nature, the earth, with men upon it (the divineness of souls except), will not seem much other than an ant-hill, where some ants carry corn, and some carry their young, and some go empty, and all to and fro a little heap of dust."

I think the true aroma of humour—for it is scarcely capable of exact definition—will be perceived in these passages by all those who have their senses exercised to discern it.

Mr. F. Wentworth-Sheilds thought that the abundant and unfailing luxuriance of brilliant imagery and fancy displayed throughout Bacon's works, offered a strong presumption in favour of his possessing the faculties of imagination and power of expression which are the essential qualifications of a poet of the first order. In fact almost every page of his prose teems with new and bright ideas, which would supply material for poetry to an unlimited extent. And looking to the numerous and remarkable coincidences in the works of Bacon and Shakespeare, he believed that the decision of the question whether Bacon himself was the one who turned the prose into poetry, or the poetry into prose, was in the course of definite solution.

Mrs. Stopes being unexpectedly invited to speak, said that here were two questions at issue, not one ; the first being whether Bacon was a poet, and the second whether he was *the* poet.

As to the first, every one must agree that all the works of Bacon, both in scheme and expression, showed evidences of a

poetic mind. Poetry is generally expressed in rhythmic, measured, or law-restrained forms (the "Oratio vincta"); but it may also appear under the free form of prose (the "Oratio soluta").

This distinction is given in Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," when he divides human learning into history, poetry, and philosophy. "Poetry is taken in two senses, in respect of words or matter. In the first sense it is but a character of style, and belongeth to arts of speech, and is not pertinent for the present." So that Bacon did not consider the form of poetry necessary to the poet, and in his prose works we may find not only that Bacon is a poet, but that he considered himself so. He divides poetry into three forms, narrative or epic, representative or dramatic, and allusive or moral. The common characteristic of all is that they were "feigned," to give some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points, wherein the nature of things doth deny it, the world being in proportion inferior to the soul; by reason whereof, there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things. Hence the whole plan of his great work, which had this aim, might make him call himself a "concealed poet."

While agreeing cordially with the reader of the paper, that Bacon was *a poet*, I differ from him on the second point, less emphasized, but assumed, that he is THE POET! We are not now dealing with facts, or I should bring them forward, but with opinions. Taking Bacon's life and acknowledged works, I should not think it probable that he wrote the plays commonly called Shakespeare. Though a poet can write either in prose or verse, it is likely that his delicate taste soon shows him which form of expression suits his thought best, and he will continue to use it in his riper life. If he is habituated to one form of expression, he will not easily adapt himself to another, just as a poet may be capable of writing poetry *either* in French or English; but he seldom or never does *both*. Bacon's pre-eminence lay in poetical prose, expression in the free form of speech, of learned and imaginative thought, and

I scarcely think it possible he should have attempted *great* works in verse, in his ripe years, at least.

Further, I do not consider the lines of thought, education, and feeling, in the two sets of works, similar enough to support this opinion. Certain resemblances are always suggested to each other by great minds living at the same period. Ideas, and forms of speech float "in the air." The London of their days was not the London of to-day, and it was certain that all the wits and literary men met frequently at the Mermaid or elsewhere.

Lastly, while we know that Shakspere only "knew a little Latin and less Greek," a fact supported by his plays, we know that Bacon was a scholar, versed in all the learning of the ancients, acquainted with the form of the Greek Drama, with its laws and unities. Had he written plays, I cannot imagine it psychologically possible he could have divested himself of this habit of thought for no sufficient reason; that he would have disregarded these artistic unities in order to found the romantic school, which, though known before, attained its name and fame through the peculiar freedom of the Shakespearian drama.

Mr. Theobald, referring to Mrs. Stopes' suggestion that Bacon, if he had written plays, would have adhered to the classic form, with its rigid unities, remarked: In my view this is exactly what Bacon—the reformer of all learning, the leader and pioneer of a revolt against the limitation of classic precedents in all things, the large and liberal thinker who emancipated himself from all scholastic trammels, and inaugurated a new kingdom of man—would *not* have done. Surely, if anywhere the new laws and liberties of romanticism are to be found, they are in Bacon's writings. In the very passage quoted, Bacon vindicated for poetry a freedom which at once leaps over the boundaries of classic forms, when he says that, "Poesy is a part of learning in measure of words for the most part restrained, but in all other points extremely licensed, and doth truly refer to the imagination; which being not tied to the laws of matter may at pleasure join that which

nature hath severed, and sever that which nature hath joined; and so make unlawful matches and divorces of things." In fact, the ideal described in Bacon's prose is exactly realised in the Shakespearian drama.

Bacon was, according to his own words, "a concealed poet." The poetry in his prose works is *not* in the least concealed, and he might just as well have talked about his concealed socks,—not in Ben Jonson's but his valet's sense—if he meant this. We must look elsewhere for an explanation of this Delphic phrase.

TAINE, in his *History of English Literature*, notes that Shakespeare abounds in metaphors and images. And of Bacon he says:—"Bacon a pensé à la manière des artistes et des poètes, et parle à la façon des prophètes et des divins. C'est par des figures poétiques, abréviations enigmatiques, et presque par des vers sibyllins qu'il les exprime. Shakespeare et les voyants n'ont pas des condensations de pensées plus energiques, plus expressives. . . . A la façon des poètes il peuple la nature d'instincts et d'inclinations."

NOTES TO THE PASSAGES QUOTED ON PAGES 132—134.

We think it desirable to refer to such Shakespearian parallels as can be briefly supplied to some of the quotations from Bacon in this paper. We do not ourselves at present make any inferences from these comparisons, beyond the very general one that they shew some sort of affinity between Bacon and Shakespeare. How far that affinity extends we must leave each reader to judge for himself, merely protesting against hasty conclusions, and insisting that the case is one for very careful, detailed study, and not for summary judgment. The discussion of parallels, indeed, requires a careful and scientific investigation, equally removed from prejudice and bias. At any rate, the interest of both sets of writings is heightened by drawing comparisons between them, and we think new light is cast upon both groups of writings.

1. The "sovereignty" of truth here asserted is also implied in—

> "Falseness cannot come from thee, for thou look'st
> Modest as justice, and thou seem'st a palace
> For the crowned truth to dwell in."—*Pericles* v. 1, 180.

The tripartite division of courtship in this passage is curiously reproduced in a comic form in *Love's Labour Lost*, III., i., speeches 12 to 19 between Moth and Armado.

2. The grand cosmic imagery of this passage, in which planetary laws are used to symbolise the movements, rest and attractions of the mind, is frequent in Shakespeare, and is used with much more extended application in *Triolus and Cressida*, Act I., sc. i., 85, &c., and in *Julius Cæsar*, III., i., 60.

> "For I am constant as the northern star,
> Of whose true fixed and resting quality
> There is no fellow in the firmament," &c., &c.

3. "A noble spirit
As yours was put into you, ever casts
Such doubts, as false coin, from it."—*Henry VIII.*, iii.

"Well Brutus, thou art noble, yet I see
Thy honourable metal may be wrought
From that it is disposed."—*Jul. Cæs.*, I., ii., 308.

"Now I feel
Of what coarse metal ye are moulded."—*Hen. VIII.*, III., ii., 238.

4. "Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?"—*Macb. V.*

5. "This day I breathed first: time is come round,
And where I did begin there shall I end:
My life is run his compass."—*ib.* V., iii., 23.

"Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear
[*i.e.*, death],
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when come it will."—*ib.* II., ii., 34.

"In peace and honour rest you here, my sons:
* * * *
Secure from worldly chances and mishaps;
Here lurks no treason, here no envy swells."—
Tit. And., I., ii., 87.

"No black envy," "No slander, censure rash," are well-known elegies chanted over Shakespearian tombs.

6. This is a maxim of the *Philosophia prima*, often quoted by Bacon. The same is exactly reproduced in Shakespeare. It is a typical instance of Bacon's characteristic philosophy.

"All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed."—*Mer. V.*, II., vi., 13.

7. "Doth not our life consist of four elements."—*Tw. N.* II., iii., 3rd speech.
"The elements of earth and air."—*Tw. N.*, I., v.
"The elements of fire and water."—*Rich. III.*, III., iii.
"The two moist elements (air and water)."—*Tro. Cr.* I., iii., 41.

The figure of a Divine Marshall reminds us of Macbeth's undivine guide.

"Thou marshal'st me the way I was going."—*Macb.* II., i., 42.
"Reason becomes the marshall of my will."—*M. N. D.*, II., iii., 119.

8. "Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth."—*Sonnet* 146.
"We in your motion turn, and you may move us."—
Com. Er. III., ii., 24.

9. Richard the Third declared that nature had afflicted him with deformity—

"To disproportion me in every part,
Like to a chaos, or unlick'd bear-whelp,
That carries no impression like the dam."—
3 *Hen. 6th*, III., ii., 160.

"The loathly births of nature."—2 *Hen. 4th*, IV., iv., 122.

Whatever "hurly-burly innovation" (1 *Hen. IV.*, *V.*, i.) may mean, the epithet graphically and onomapoetically expresses the same idea of an awkward, ill-shapen creature that the *Essay of Innovations* alludes to.

10. "A crowd is not company" is the sentiment of—

"I measuring his affections by my own,
That most are busied when they're most alone,
Being one too many by my weary self."—
Rom. & Jul., I., i., 131.

Bacon, in a letter to Villiers, May 2, 1616, says of the King: "I perceive his Majesty is never less alone than when he is alone."

"Faces are only pictures . . . without love." Compare "Words are but the images of matter; and except they have life of Reason and Invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture."—*Adv. of L.*, *Op.* III., 284.

Bacon, after discoursing on Ethics as a science, passes on to discuss the culture and practice of Duty, and adds—

"Without which the former seemeth to be no better than a fair image, or statua, which is beautiful to contemplate, but without life or motion."—*Op.* I., 432.

So that he habitually regarded all things—faces, words, qualities, persons—as pictures, images, or statues, if their proper life is wanting.

The same habit is indicated in the following passages:

"Poor Ophelia,
Divided from herself, and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts."—
Ham. IV., v., 81.

"The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures."—*Macb.* II., ii. 52.

"Thou picture of what thou seemest, and idol of idiot-worshippers!"—*Tro. Cr.* V., i.

"She shows a body rather than a life,
A statue than a breather."—*Ant. Cl.* III., iii., 20.

Portia, satirically describing one of her suitors, says,

"He is a proper man's picture! But, alas! who can converse with a dumb show?"—*Mer. V.* I., ii.

Probably the story of Pygmalion is the background of most of these "picture" allusions. It is expressly referred to in the context of the above passage from the *Advancement of Learning.*

11. The community of joy and sorrow in friendship is a common theme in Shakespeare. See *Lear*, III., vi., 102; *Tit. An.*, V., iii., 169; *Jul. Cæs.* IV., iii., 85; *W. Tale*, V., ii., 3rd and 4th speeches from the end; and many other passages (see "Bacon Journal," p. 97).

12. "Wealth is the burthen of my wooing dance."—
Tam. Sh., I., ii., 67.

"The king has cured me,
I humbly thank his grace, and from these shoulders,
These ruined pillars, out of pity, taken
A load would sink a navy,—too much honour.
Oh! 'tis a burden, Cromwell, 'tis a burden
Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven."—
Hen. 8th, III., ii., 380.

13. Amongst the many interesting parallels to this passage we can only select the following—

"Like bright metal on a sullen ground,
My reformation glittering o'er my fault
Shall show more goodly, and attract more eyes,
Than that which hath no foil to set it off."—
1 *Hen. 4th*, I., ii., 216.

"The chamomile, the more it is *trodden upon*, the faster it grows."—
1 *Hen. 4th*, II., iv.

"Thou on *pressed* flowers dost sleep."—*M. N. D.*, III., i., 164.

Compare with these passages the "Essay of Gardens." Bacon seems to have been very interested in the varying effects on flowers, of their being "crushed," "trodden upon," and "pressed."

HIGGINS ON THE BACON-SHAKESPEARE CONTROVERSY.*

In the debate on the great question of Bacon's claim to the dignities and properties vested in Shakespeare, the usual tactics employed by those in possession resemble that which is sometimes adopted in Parliament to a factious opposition; no reply is given to their arguments or appeals; the discourse is allowed to be one-sided, and the Ministerialists are severely and ostentatiously silent. If Baconians are asked, as they often are, for a statement of the "other side" of the case, they are at a loss. Here, however, is a small pamphlet, of fifty pages, which, in the absence of any other claimant, may challenge the position of a classic, written in defence of William Shakspere. It is published by "Henry Young, 12, South Castle Street, Liverpool;" and to this remote province must those travel who wish to find out what is the best defence that can be offered to Shakspere. However, the vindication of the established view may be very wise, although the speaker sits below the gangway.

Dr. Higgins is a Shakespearian enthusiast; he revels in the wisdom and beauty of the plays and poems. He is also an archeologist in Shakspere antiquities, and by force of habit these two branches of study have linked themselves together in his mind, and he believes that the connection between *Lear* and *Hamlet*, and the Stratford playwright, is a case of real paternity which only very anarchical persons will seek to dispute. The suggestion that Bacon is the true sire of this glorious progeny excites his honest but very real indignation. In the discussion of his question it is first of all very clear that anyone who wishes to decide or judge authoritatively, must know in a

* "Who Wrote the Plays Ascribed to Shakespere"? the substance of lectures delivered at Birkenhead, Penrith, and elsewhere; by Charles H. Higgins, M.D., Liverpool.

fairly broad and accurate way four things: First, the plays and poems of Shakespeare; second, the personal history of William Shakspere; third, the writings of Francis Bacon; and fourth, Bacon's personal history, career, and character. Now, we are quite willing to admit Dr. Higgins competency so far as the first two of these qualifications is answered; but we fail to recognise either Bacon himself or Bacon's works in Dr. Higgins's glass. If Bacon really does deserve the very black portraiture in which he is painted in these pages, of course the whole question is decided. For Shakespeare certainly was written by a gentleman, by a man of character, capable of fine feelings and genuine emotion. The true Shakespeare was not a heartless old pedant, learned and talented, but without so much of our average stock of common-place human virtue as is necessary to make a man decent and respectable; he was not "ambitious, vain, covetous, selfish, worldly, deficient in human sympathies," "all head and no heart," "entirely wanting in the sense of poetic fitness and melody,"—a sordid place-hunter, even in marriage—a false, treacherous friend, &c., &c. We know all the lines of this fancy portrait, drawn so airily by Macaulay, and accepted as gospel by those who ignore the fact that what professes to be a complete and exhaustive refutation of all these harsh judgments has been more than once made. It is unfortunate that the Bacon-Shakespeare question should be embarrassed by these collateral issues, which become artificial obstructions to any free handling of the case. These blocking assumptions are easily assumed, and if they are accepted, put a peremptory *closure* at once upon all the high claims which Baconians make. It is impossible to be perpetually slaying over again these thrice-slain slanders—all we can do is to ask the critics who still produce them, why they ignore all the arguments of Spedding's "Evenings with a Reviewer," and all the contrary impressions of the best judges, such as Dixon, Fowler, Wright, and many others.

Dr. Higgins curiously fails to see the striking and innumerable parallelisms between Shakespeare and Bacon. He has, he says, been through all those produced by Judge Holmes, and finds every one of them "far-fetched, mistaken, or forced;"

and by way of illustration he produces a few which are probably the weakest he could find. We may point out that the investigation of these parallels has been carried much further since Judge Holmes's book appeared. His book is in many respects admirable; but he is avowedly listening for "footfalls"—*i.e.*, for such delicate and subtle resemblances as a hasty critic, cramming up materials for a popular lecture, is likely to think quite non-significant. But we may ask, what do these critics expect? Do they look for exact reproduction of Bacon's Essays, or of his Philosophical writings, in the Plays and Poems? On the theory that the writer was hiding himself, can we expect any other resemblances than those which are subtle, evanescent, unconscious, or else such as are carefully and artfully disguised, so as to be only visible when they are unmasked. Those who have really investigated the matter know quite well that correspondences of these kinds are so plentiful that they force the question of authorship to the front; and that while the number of parallels of the "footfall" kind is incalculable, even those which are "gross as a mountain, open, palpable," are so abundant that Baconians wonder how it was that the writer allowed all these compromising utterances to escape from his pen, and why Shakespearian commentators have not long ago found them out. For example, the expression we have just quoted—"*gross and palpable*"—is one of Bacon's inventions; it was new to English verbal currency when he wrote: it is now coin which any one may pick up and traffic with: when it was first invented it carried the mark of the Baconian mint, and no one would have attributed its introduction to any one else. Bacon, in his charge against Oliver St. John, in summing up his indictments against the prisoner, uses this expression: "The second is a slander, and falsification, and wresting of the law of the land, *gross and palpable.*"—"Life" v. 141. In his charge against Lady Somerset, referring to her secret plan of murdering Overbury by poison; he describes the crime as one "done with an oath or vow of secresy, which is like the Egyptian darkness, a *gross and palpable* darkness that may be felt."—"Life" v. 303. In his observation on a libel, he promises his readers that he will

give them "a taste of their untruths, especially such as are wittily contrived, and we are not merely *gross and palpable.*" (Vol. i., 267). And in the "Advancement of Learning" he refers to the "*gross and palpable* flattery wherewith many (not the unlearned) have abased and abused their wits and pens."—Vol. iii., 281. The Shakesperian passages which reproduce the same phraseology are :—

> "This palpable, gross play hath well beguiled,
> The heavy gait of night."—*M.N.D., v.* 1.

"These lies are like the father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable."—1 *Hen. IV. ii. iv.*

And a trace of the same is found in *Hen. V. ii.* 2.

> "'Tis so strange
> That though the truth of it stand out as gross
> As black and white, my eye will scarcely see it."

Other similar passages might be quoted.

Let this specimen—not by any means one of the strongest—be taken as a type: and it is plain that most of such cases want working out. They cannot be decided upon without careful examination and reflection.

It requires a delicate and sympathetic ear to detect a footfall and to identify the living creature whose approach it indicates. Doubtless, the study of footfalls is a dangerous one,—where fancy and speculation may run riot, and deceive themselves with toys and phantoms. But it is easier to ridicule such misapplied ingenuity and condemn the entire process, than to distinguish between the genuine and the false, the strong and the weak, to measure the weight of each, and to restrain fancy in its gambols without clipping its wings or putting out its eyes. We know of nothing more reckless and unphilosophical than the indiscriminating censure passed by many critics on the delicate process of uncovering the hidden traces of Bacon which are unquestionably to be found in Shakespeare whatever may be the conclusions which they bear. It is easy to ridicule these subtle, airy speculations, if only bad specimens are selected, and left to the mercy of shallow readers who have never in their lives troubled their heads with the finer

problems of criticism and philology; but this is not sense and science—it is rude and unreflective vandalism.

As an illustration of one of the arguments often used against Bacon we may single out what Dr. Higgins alleges, that Bacon's "Essay on Love" is in absolute contrast to Shakespeare's pictures of the same passion. Here we think he is mistaken, and will give some evidence to the contrary. It is true that Bacon looks on love as a "weak passion," which must not be allowed to embarrass the serious business of life, for if it "check once with business it troubleth men's fortunes." Now we contend that this is also one side of the Shakesperian view of the same question. As Bacon expressly says that "The stage is more beholding to Love than the life of man," we are entitled to look to Bacon's dramatic writings, if there are such, for his complete picture of Love, rather than to his didactic and reflective writings. Bacon's "Essay on Love" might have been written as a reflective commentary, or a moral application of Shakespeare's *Anthony and Cleopatra*, to the story of which, indeed, it is expressly referred. The essay may be taken as the key-note of the play. The play shews the "dotage of the general, o'erflowing the measure," "his goodly eyes glowing like plated Mars, turning away from the files and musters of the war," and "bending the office and devotion of their view upon a tawny front." It shows Anthony, warped and spoiled by his passion, and so "coming short of that great property which still should go with Anthony." In short, Anthony is painted as a heroic spirit, whose great business is checked and ruined, and himself transported and wrecked by the mad degree of love. The fact is that the madness, or lunacy, or folly of love—its "blindness," its "feigning," its propensity to "counterfeit," its absurdity, its incompatibility with wisdom, are constant themes with Shakespeare. Such a passage as the following is typical:—

"I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love. . . . Love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool."—*Much Ado.*, II., iii.

The tendency of love, of which Bacon speaks, to "trouble a man's fortunes and make him untrue to his own ends," is most forcibly illustrated in the character of Proteus, who contrasts his slavery as a lover, with Valentine's freedom, as a student and citizen, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act I., sc. i. 63—69,

> "He after honour hunts, I after love;
> He leaves his friends to dignify them more,
> I leave my friends, myself, and all for love.
> Thou, Julia, thou has metamorphosed me;
> Made me neglect my studies, lose my time,
> War with good counsel, set the world at naught,
> Made wit with musing weak, heart sick with thought."

The same picture, which would be called cynical, but for the charter of dramatic license which protects it from criticism, is drawn in even deeper colours in some of the closing stanzas of *Venus and Adonis;* where the goddess of love herself prophecies concerning the passion which she evokes:—

> "Since thou art dead, lo! here I prophecy
> Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend;
> It shall be waited on with jealousy,
> Find sweet beginning, but unsavoury end,
> Ne'er settled equally, too high or low,
> That all love's pleasure shall not match its woe.
>
> It shall be fickle, false, and full of fraud,
> And shall be blasted in a breathing-while;
> The bottom poison, and the top o'er-strawed
> With sweets, that shall the sharpest sight beguile,
> The strongest body shall it make most weak,
> Strike the wise dumb, and teach the fool to speak.
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> It shall be raging-mad and silly-mild,
> Make the young old, the old become a child." &c., &c.

There are five stanzas in this strain, exactly reproducing the sentiment of Bacon's prose essay. Note, too, that these lines are not dramatic; they express the individual sentiments of the poet. Falstaff, too, is talking quite in Bacon's own manner when he says to Mistress Ann Page, "Ask me no reason why I love thee: for though love use

reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor." Bacon however, draws noble pictures of the diviner aspects of love: we can only refer our readers to the passage in the 2nd book of the "Advancement of Learning," xx. 15, page 213—215 in the Clarendon edition.

It is obviously impossible to dissect all the arguments and assertions of Dr. Higgins. There are plenty of little statements that might take pages of refutation or explanation. As Bacon himself says, *Verborum minutiis rerum frangit pondera.* It is of no use taking facts out of the faggot and breaking them up one by one: this is a delusive show of destructive force, which is accurately described by Bacon himself—"When you descend into their distinctions and decisions, instead of a fruitful womb for the use and benefit of man's life, they end in monstrous altercations and barking questions."

The second lecture is chiefly devoted to proving that the Shakespearian plays "could have been the production only of a person intimately acquainted with every form of rural life: not alone *familiar* with them, but deeply *touched* by them too." It is implied that Bacon could not have been thus familiar and thus touched, because, among other reasons, perhaps he did *not* live in the country, but in town. It is difficult to understand how any critic can rely on such an argument as this: the latent assumption being, either that Bacon never at any time of his life spent so much time in the country as to become either "familiar" with it or "touched" by it—or that, being devoid of natural sensibility he took his walks about the country with his eyes shut. This, however absurd it may appear, is the logical ground of Dr. Higgins's reasoning, so far as we can make it out. It is scarcely necessary to discuss it; but it is just as well to remind those who are likely to feel any force in such thin arguments, that Bacon's whole life was spent either in or near the country. Much of his time was passed in the deep, rural, sequestered retirement of Gorhambury, or in the exquisite scenery of Twickenham. And even in London he lived, as Mr. W. H. Smith is fond of remarking, not in what *we* call "the Strand,"—a busy, crowded street, but on the romantic strand of the Thames, amid the

gardens of York House, and within sight of green fields and country walks. As Bacon was not always an exalted legal dignitary—Lord Keeper or Lord Chancellor—so London was not then what it is now, a wilderness of bricks and mortar, where a man may live a long life and never see a green field or a healthy tree. Country life and town life were then in close contact: and certainly the youngest son of an aristocratic house was likely to spend much of his early life in the country seat of his father, and to come into close contact with all types of rural life. It is however worth notice that in Shakespeare, rural life is seen from without, not from within—it is the point of view of an aristocrat looking on and taking notes, not of a provincial townsman or peasant reporting his own native experience. All the phases of country life which Dr. Higgins refers to are of this class, and Mrs. Pott has well observed that rustic experience is conspicuously absent from the plays, or only used allusively, not as a primary centre of interest, or scene of action. Shakespeare is even reproached for his aristocratic aloofness from middle-class life: the virtuous peasant is represented only by two servants—Adam, in *As You Like It*, and Flavius the steward of *Timon*—and these are humble retainers of aristocratic masters, rustic parasites sucking their virtue out of an aristocratic organism. So that the exceptions not only prove the rule, they emphasize and accentuate it. This is so well known that we need not enlarge upon it.

Dr. Higgins's inaccuracies concern himself rather than us. But we can scarcely think it excusable for a critic entering upon the discussion of this question to suppose that the *Promus* is "not mentioned by any of the editors and biographers of Bacon,"—the fact being that Spedding gives a careful descrip- of it, with numerous specimens, and that the editor of the recent edition of the *Promus* expressly says that she was induced by Spedding's account and by his extracts to hunt up the M.S. for herself and reproduce it *in extenso*. Dr. Higgins also makes the amazing assertion that "Mrs. Potts (*sic*) has brought herself to doubt that such a person as William Shakspere ever existed," which is of course another "gross and palpable" blunder, and a plain proof that he has not read either the *Promus* or its

editor's pamphlets, in which the leading events of Shakspere's life are contrasted in detail with the contemporary events in the life of Francis Bacon. A critic who goes astray on such simple questions of fact may easily blunder in more important matters. Accordingly his statement that there are numerous "contemporary testimonies to the authorship" of the plays by William Shakspere, is equally erroneous. There are absolutely *no* contemporary testimonies that will bear a moment's cross-examination. So far as contemporary testimony is concerned—we do not mean *allusions*, which may be produced in scores, but which have no evidential weight at all, —the question is open. Ben Jonson's evidence, when carefully analyzed, is found to be entirely Baconian. To cite the lay figures ticketed as Heminge and Condell, or Leonard Digges, or Chettle, or Meres, is about as relevant for purposes of identification as to quote Thomas Thorpe, the publisher of the Sonnets, or Francis Collins, Julius Shaw, John Robinson, Hamnet Sadler, and Robert Whatcott, witnesses to Shakspere's will.

And so of all the rest of the speculative facts and inferences out of which Shakspere's biography is constructed. When Bacon's authorship is under consideration it is futile to run glibly over all these happy-go-lucky guesses of biologized biographers as if they were fixed and everlasting verities. They are in fact the very elements of the problem, from the negative side, and if they are introduced at all, it must be with the *caveat* that they shall not be used for *petitio principii* purposes: which is exactly the use Dr. Higgins does make of them.

The Postulate—and a perfectly fair one—of the whole case is that the poet wore a mask and intended to keep himself concealed. Now we unhesitatingly affirm—and we are quite willing to go to Dr. Higgins's pamphlet for proof—that no one has ever produced a fragment of evidence inconsistent with this hypothesis—no particle of testimony that the man Shakspere and the name Shakespeare were *not* used as cover, but that the Stratford playwright was himself the author of all this poetry. Nothing that Halliwell-Phillips, or Dr. Ingleby, or any of the Shakespeare archeologists produce rebuts

this supposition: every authentic fact known about Shakespeare supports, confirms, and enormously corroborates it. The critics shirk the question—pretend that the puzzle does not exist—and affect to see nothing surprising in the notion that the grandest achievements of literature had their seed-bed and growing-ground in the uncultured mind, the mean *entourage*, and the sordid pursuits of this Stratford nonentity.

PARALLELISM.

Bacon, among other scientific *desiderata* which he suggested in his *De Augmentis*, wished a collection to be made of "what schoolmen term the *ultimities*, and Pindarthe *tops* or *summits* of human nature," specimens, that is, of highest attainments in the several departments of human culture, action, or endurance. The following is a specimen of the kind of "instances" which he had in his mind:—

"What a proof of patience is displayed in the story told of Anaxarchus, who, when questioned under torture, bit out his own tongue (the only hope of information), and spat it into the face of the tyrant" (Op. iv. 374).

This story is derived from Diogenes Laertius; Bacon's version is taken from Pliny or Valerius Maximus.

Where did Shakespeare find the same story? In Richard II., Act 1, Scene 1. Bolingbroke, being invited by the king to reconcile himself to Mowbray, and throw down Mowbray's gage of battle which he had picked up, replies:—

> O God, defend my soul from such foul sin!
> Shall I seem crest-fallen in my father's sight;
> Or with pale beggar-fear impeach my height
> Before this out-dared dastard? Ere my tongue
> Shall wound mine honour with such feeble wrong,
> Or sound so base a parle, my teeth shall tear
> The slavish motive of recanting fear,
> And spit it bleeding, in his high disgrace
> Where shame doth harbour, even in Mowbray's face.

The play of Richard II. was published in 1597, Bacon's *De Augmentis* in 1623; consequently Shakespeare did not borrow from Bacon. Where, then, did he pick up the allusion? Perhaps Pliny and Valerius Maximus and Diogenes Laertius were text-books at the Grammar-school of Stratford-on-Avon; or perhaps the story was "atmospheric," and Shakespeare took it in by respiration; or perhaps it is a chance coincidence; or perhaps the life of Shakspere wants re-writing. We find other traces in Shakespeare of Bacon's favourite stories, which we shall, as opportunities arise, produce. R. M. T.

MR. DONNELLY AND THE ALLEGED CIPHER.

We have deferred the issue of this number of the Journal in order that we may report upon Mr. Donnelly's article in the June and July issues of the *North American Review*, which does not reach the English public till after the middle of the month.

And having thus waited, all we can say is that we must wait still longer, that is, till Mr. Donnelly's book appears. We cannot find in Mr. Donnelly's statements any conclusive evidence of the cipher story at all. He produces a *fac-simile* of certain pages of the 1623 folio, and claims that certain words which he tells us are part of the cipher narrative, are so placed as to satisfy some arithmetical conditions of an excessively cumbrous description. But by what law the scattered words are drawn up into continuous sentences, he does not give us a hint, and till he tells us this he virtually tells us nothing. Up to the present time our faith in the cipher has only Mr. Donnelly's word to rest upon. We admit that this is weighty, for Mr. Donnelly is a man of probity, and his standing is high. But we cannot be content with this. In justice to Mr. Donnelly we must say that the very laborious calculations which he indicates are certified as accurate by those who have been able to give the time and patience required for the process of verification. The significant words, it appears, are posted where they satisfy Mr. Donnelly's arithmetic. This sort of coincidence, however, does not carry the evidence very far. One coherent sentence is worth a batallion of scattered words. We have willingly, even gladly, given great prominence in the previous numbers of this Journal to this promised cipher story; but we must say that our patience is sorely tried by Mr. Donnelly's repeated delays, and by the provoking way in which he now demands our faith, without satisfying our sight, under the penalty of being branded as "absolutely

steeped to the lips in ignorance and prejudice." We have every desire to be convinced: all our bias is in favour of the cipher, and of Mr. Donnelly's alleged discovery. But we cannot be landed in such a large conclusion without evidence of a direct character. If Mr. Donnelly is kind enough to give us an *avant gout* of his intended book before it is published, we look for some such fragment of the complete structure as we can perfectly verify and understand. In the part of his paper which deals with the cipher we cannot find anything of this kind.

The remainder of the article is devoted to a re-statement of the Baconian argument; which is put in a striking and convincing way, with a generous acknowledgment of the labours of others, especially Mrs. Pott, in the same field. For this we are thankful: but anyone who knows the subject could have done all this. What we want from Mr. Donnelly is the cipher, the whole cipher, and nothing but the cipher. Until the book appears, we must withhold both criticism and certification.

Mr. Donnelly points out the following interesting parallelism. Bacon says, in "Sylva Sylvarum," section 745:—

> "Some noises help sleep . . . as *soft singing*. The cause is, for that they *move in the spirits a gentle attention*."

While in Shakespeare we have the following: *Merchant of Venice*, Act V., sc. i., 69, 70.

> "I am never merry when I hear sweet music.
> The reason is, your spirits are attentive."

Here we have the same conception in identical language. In each case the philosopher not only observes the same fact, but gives the same reason for the thing he observes. The connection between "soft singing" or "sweet music" as producing a lulling, soporific effect, antagonistic to any merry mood, and its action in making the spirits calmly attentive, is not by any means a commonplace notion likely to be floating "in the air." It has all the marks of a private, individual observation, and is remarkably characteristic of Bacon's reflective way of tracing the scientific link between cause and effect.

ENGLAND'S HELICON,

A collection of lyrical and pastoral poems published in 1600, re-published with additions in 1614, and now again re-published under the editorship of Mr. Bullen, contains a number of poems signed *Ignoto*, others signed *Shepherd Tony*; and the editor refers to a considerable collection of these poems, written by some "Concealed Poet." Is it not possible to lift the mask that half reveals and half conceals the personality of *Ignoto* and *Shepherd Tony?* The following, called "An Invective Against Love," is a specimen (p. 210):—

All is not gold that shineth bright in show;
Not every flower so good as fair to sight;
The deepest streams above do calmest flow;
The strongest poisons oft the taste delight;
The pleasant bait doth hide the harmful hook,
And false deceit can lend a friendly look.

Love is the gold whose outward hue doth pass,
Whose first beginnings goodly promise make
Of pleasures fair and fresh as summer's grass,
Which neither sun can parch, nor wind can shake;
But when the mould should in the fire be tried,
The gold is gone, the dross doth still abide.

Beauty, the flower so fresh, so fair, so gay,
So sweet to smell, so soft to touch and taste,
As seems it should endure, by right, for aye,
And never be with any storm defaced;
But when the baleful Southern wind doth blow,
Gone is the glory which it erst did know.

Love is the stream whose waves so calmly flow,
As might entice men's minds to wade therein;
Love is the poison mixed with sugar so
As might by outward sweetness liking win;
But as the deep o'erflowing stops thy breath,
So poison once received brings certain death.

Love is the bait whose taste the fish deceives,
And makes them swallow down the choking hook;
Love is the face whose fairness judgment reaves,
And makes thee trust a false and feigned look;
But as the hook the foolish fish doth kill.
So flattering looks the lover's life doth spill!

From a Correspondent.

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